

Workshop teaches transplanting

BY GARY SCHNEIDER

The ongoing series of workshops cosponsored by the Natural History Society and the Island Nature Trust continues to be a great success. The latest in the series, on transplanting trees and shrubs, was held on April 14 at the Farm Centre in Charlottetown and drew large and enthusiastic crowd.

Geoff Hogan, NHS director and owner of Bird's Eye Nature Store in Charlottetown began the workshop with advice on what to transplant and why you should think of transplanting native trees, shrubs and vines. Geoff pointed out that they can often be much cheaper (even when you figure in your time) and that they are better suited to our climate. Many have great benefits for wildlife and others are simply grown for their beauty.

Indian pear (also known as service berry, Indian plum, saskatoon, and many more) and staghorn sumac were high on the list of favourites, which included american elm, white birch, red maple, sugar maple, american and showy mountain ash. Only white pine and white spruce make good ornamentals amongst the conifers, but eastern larch is also a valuable addition to your property. Red oak should be grown from acorns, and will do quite well here.

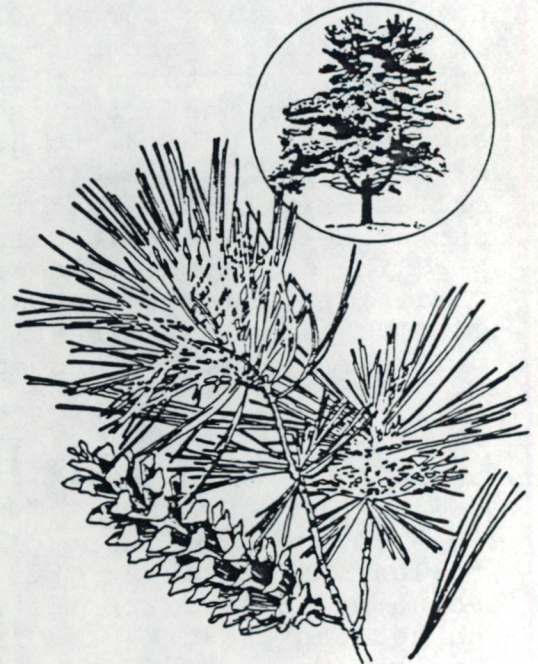
Pin cherry and choke cherry were two species that drew poor marks, as they are short-lived and also spread black knot to cultivated cherry and plum trees.

Native shrubs such as the red-berried elder, bayberry and the virginia rose are suitable candidates for transplanting, as are the non-native but numerous common lilac and cinnamon rose. Virginia creeper and a native clematis are also valuable.

Slides illustrated the types of trees and shrubs discussed, and the methods of planting. Many were of Geoff's own well-landscaped property in Springvale. Especially interesting were the ones showing Geoff's work establishing a white spruce hedge.

Dan McAskill, NHS Vice-president working with the Department of Energy and Forestry, had been out the evening before the workshop taking samples of many of our native species so that people could get a close look at the differences in twigs, buds, bark, etc. It is always much easier to have the real thing to look at, instead of just a field guide.

Dan showed how to tell the various trees and shrubs apart before they leaf out (it is best to transplant in the spring and many guides focus too much on leaf shape). He also identified good candidates for transplanting - straight, well-formed seedlings with a good end bud, and avoiding seedlings with flushed buds or that are suckers from cut trees. The best place to look for the hardwood seedlings is a forestry road 2-5 years after it has been bulldozed, but as always, only after asking permission from the landowner. After transplanting, a minimum of 30% of side growth should be cut off to compensate for root damage.



WHITE PINE